

SECTION 9.0 ALTERNATIVES

9.1 INTRODUCTION

Section 15126.6 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines requires that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the proposed project that could feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project and are capable of avoiding or substantially lessening one or more of the significant effects of the proposed project. The rule of reason requires that an EIR address only those alternatives necessary to permit a reasoned choice. These alternatives must foster informed decision-making and public participation. The EIR must also provide the rationale for the selection or rejection of each alternative.

The CEQA Guidelines specifically state that an EIR should "...identify any alternatives that were considered by the lead agency but were rejected as infeasible during the scoping process and briefly explain the reasons underlying the lead agency's determination. Among the factors that may be used to eliminate alternatives from detailed consideration in an EIR are: (i) failure to meet most of the basic project objectives, (ii) infeasibility, or (iii) inability to avoid significant environmental impacts."

This Section addresses the following three alternatives to the proposed project:

- No Project/No Development Alternative.
- Existing General Plan and Zoning Alternative.
- Office/Professional Use Alternative.

For these three alternatives to the proposed West Gateway project, the analysis in this Section:

- Describes the alternative and the rationale for its consideration.
- Discusses the impacts of the alternative and evaluates the significance of those impacts.
- Evaluates the alternative relative to the proposed West Gateway project, specifically addressing project objectives, feasibility, the elimination or reduction of impacts, and comparative merits.

This Section also discusses alternatives considered but rejected by the City and not evaluated in detail in this EIR.

9.2 CRITERIA FOR ANALYSIS OF ALTERNATIVES

9.2.1 IDENTIFICATION OF IMPACTS

After describing each alternative to the proposed West Gateway project, the potential environmental impacts of each alternative are identified. Each major resource area addressed in the impact

analysis in Section 4.0 (Existing Conditions, Impacts and Mitigation Measures) is evaluated in this Section for the alternatives to the proposed West Gateway project. The potential environmental impacts of each alternative are described.

9.2.2 COMPARISON TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

Following the identification of impacts, the alternatives were evaluated relative to the proposed West Gateway project based on the following:

Feasibility: Each alternative was evaluated to determine if it would "...feasibly attain the basic objectives of the project..." [Guidelines Section 15126.6(a)]. CEQA defines "feasible" to mean "...capable of being accomplished in a successful manner within a reasonable period of time, taking into account economic, environmental, legal, social, and technological factors" (CEQA Guidelines Section 15364).

In addition to the environmental consequences of a particular alternative, decision-makers must consider if an alternative can be implemented in a reasonable period of time and, equally important, what economic, legal, social and technological factors will or might affect its implementation.

Elimination/Reduction of Significant Adverse Impacts: The alternatives were evaluated to determine if they further minimize any potentially adverse impacts that would occur under the proposed West Gateway project, as described in detail in Section 4.0. The project-related adverse impacts that are reduced by a particular alternative analyzed in this Section are identified.

Comparative Merits: The performance of each alternative relative to the proposed West Gateway project is evaluated to determine the comparative merits of the alternatives (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6[a]). This analysis is based, in part, on a comparison to the proposed project's impacts. It also includes a discussion of the relative feasibility of each alternative.

Ability to Meet the Project Objectives: Each alternative to the proposed West Gateway project was evaluated to determine its ability to meet each of the project objectives provided in Section 2.0 (Project Description and Project Objectives).

9.3 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT REJECTED

CEQA Guidelines state that an EIR should "...identify any alternatives that were considered by the lead agency but were rejected as infeasible during the scoping process and briefly explain the reasons underlying the lead agency's determination. Among the factors that may be used to eliminate alternatives from detailed consideration in an EIR are: (i) failure to meet most of the basic project objectives, (ii) infeasibility, or (iii) inability to avoid significant environmental impacts." [Guidelines Section 15126.6(c)]

Potential alternatives to the proposed West Gateway project that were considered by the City but rejected and not evaluated in detail in this EIR were an alternative site, big box retail and a park alternative. These alternatives which were considered by the City but were not carried forward for detailed analysis in this EIR are described in the following Sections.

9.3.1 ALTERNATIVE SITE FOR THE PROPOSED PROJECT

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126 states that an EIR should consider alternate locations to the proposed project if an alternate location would avoid or substantially lessen the project's significant environmental effects. However, consideration of an alternative location for the proposed West Gateway project is not appropriate in this case. The objectives of the proposed project focus on development and improvements within the West Gateway project area in order to revitalize Downtown Long Beach as expressed in the Redevelopment Plan for Downtown Long Beach. The Plan's objectives and policies include accommodating future growth, including residential development; encouraging mixed use development including low-income housing and neighborhood-serving retail; and increasing the total number of housing units within the City. The Redevelopment Plan for Downtown Long Beach vision and development guidelines address unique characteristics and features of the project area that are not present elsewhere in the City. Furthermore, promoting development and revitalization in other areas of City would merely have the effect of shifting impacts to another location, rather than avoiding or lessening potential significant adverse impacts. Therefore, this alternative is not considered further in the EIR.

9.3.2 BIG BOX RETAIL ALTERNATIVE

This Alternative would include the development of the project area with "big box" retailer and smaller ancillary uses such as fast-food restaurant, sit-down restaurant, and/or general retail shops. The overall square footage is estimated at 400,000 square feet. Development of this Alternative would convert the existing West Gateway area which includes a mixture of uses including residential, commercial, parking and vacant lots to a more intensive commercial retail center. The existing buildings, vacant lots and parking areas would be replaced with stores, entertainment/restaurants and associated parking.

Short-term impacts of this Alternative due to construction activities include localized increased noise, dust and vehicular emissions. Long-term impacts include increased noise and air emissions. Traffic impacts would be increased due to greater peak hour trip generation from retail shoppers.

This alternative would meet the objective of the project by providing new opportunities for neighborhood serving retail. This alternative is neither consistent with the Downtown Strategic Plan and residential planning of the General Plan and PD-30, nor is compatible with the surrounding land uses. The objectives of the proposed project focus on development and improvements within the West Gateway project area in order to revitalize Downtown Long Beach as expressed in the Redevelopment Plan for Downtown Long Beach by accommodating future growth through residential development, encouraging development of low-income housing and neighborhood-serving retail and increasing the total number of housing units within the City. Therefore, this alternative is not considered further in the EIR.

9.3.3 PARK USE ALTERNATIVE

The Park Use Alternative considers development of the project site with a passive park including hiking/biking trails, benches, and similar amenities. A surface parking lot would be provided on the site for park visitors. With the majority of the site converted to open space, this Alternative would have lesser environmental impacts and would be considered an environmentally superior alternative to the proposed project. Traffic impacts would be reduced due to less peak hour trip generation from park visitors. Aesthetic impacts would be minimal since the site would consist primarily of open space. Construction impacts would be greatly reduced because only limited facilities such as the access roadway, park amenities, parking lot, and restrooms would be constructed.

This alternative would preclude the achievement of the project's major objectives to provide residential development, encouraging mixed use development including low-income housing and neighborhood-serving retail and increase the total number of housing units within the City. Therefore, this alternative is not considered further in the EIR.

9.4 DESCRIPTIONS OF ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED WEST GATEWAY PROJECT

9.4.1 INTRODUCTION

One of the alternatives required for analysis in an EIR is the No Project Alternative. The CEQA Guidelines (15126.6[e]) state that the "...no project analysis shall discuss the existing conditions at the time the Notice of Preparation is published... as well as what would be reasonably expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the project were not approved, based on current plans and consistent with available infrastructure and community services."

The No Project Alternative is required by CEQA to establish a comparative basis for understanding the impacts of a proposed project and alternatives to that proposed project. Section 4.0 of this EIR analyzes the impacts of the proposed West Gateway project on existing conditions. The No Project Alternative analysis discusses the existing conditions at the time the Notice of Preparation (NOP) was published, as well as what would be reasonably expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the proposed project was not approved, based on current plans and consistent with available infrastructure [CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(2)].

The Existing General Plan and Zoning Alternative assumes the site is developed based on the existing General Plan designation and Zoning for these properties and what would be reasonably expected to develop under the existing zoning development standards.

In addition, this EIR considered an Office/Professional Use Alternative to the proposed West Gateway project. The Office Use Alternative investigates a higher intensity of uses on the project site and introducing office and professional services including civic center uses. While this Alternative does not meet many of the project objectives or significantly reduce any impacts, it is the most reasonable or practical land use alternative to the proposed project. The No Project Alternative, the Existing General Plan and Zoning Alternative and the Office/Professional Use Alternative are described in the following Sections.

9.4.2 NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

This No Project Alternative assumes that the approximately 11.66-acre site would not be developed as a mixed-use project and that all the existing uses would be retained on the site. No new development would occur on this site under this No Project Alternative.

9.4.3 EXISTING GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING ALTERNATIVE

This Alternative assumes that the approximately 11.66-acre project site would be developed to its maximum residential land use potential consistent with the site's existing General Plan and zoning designation. This alternative would also have the same amount of retail commercial land uses (15,000 square feet) in the same location along Magnolia Avenue as the proposed West Gateway project. This is consistent with the existing commercial character of Magnolia Avenue and the predominately residential character of the remainder of the project site.

The West Gateway Area is split by two districts in PD-30, the Downtown Mixed Use District which includes Parcels 9, 10 and 11 and the West End Residential District, a larger area which includes Parcels 2 through 7. Figure 4.7-2 shows the boundaries of these two districts in PD-30. The Downtown Mixed Use District allows commercial development on all properties, while the West End Residential District limits commercial land uses to a few specified arterial intersections (Magnolia Avenue and 3rd Street is the only project site intersection permitted for commercial uses) in conformance with the Commercial Neighborhood Pedestrian (CNP) zoning district. The Downtown Mixed Use District requires a minimum building front yard setback of ten feet and limits the maximum building height to six stories and 80 feet. The West End Residential District requires a minimum 15-foot building front yard setback with a building height limit of four stories and 50 feet. For both PD-30 districts, residential densities are permitted at up to 43 unit per acre for lots between 7,501 to 15,000 square feet in area and lots that are 15, 001 square or greater in area may have up to 54 units per acre.

This Alternative assumes that future project site development would be in full compliance with all existing General Plan LUD No. 7 and PD-30 zoning district land use and development standards. Based on the gross acreages for Parcels 9-11 (all exceed 15,001 square feet, so 54 units per acre were prescribed), the maximum residential densities are provided below.

TABLE 9-1
Maximum Allowable Dwelling Units Under
Existing General Plan and Zoning

Parcel	Acres	Allowed Dwelling Units
9	2.42	130
10	2.64	142
11	3.38	182
TOTAL		454

Based on a maximum of 54 units per acre, Parcels 9-11 could accommodate no more than 454 units under current density standards. Therefore, this alternative would provide 245 units less than the maximum density of 699 units under the proposed West Gateway project.

9.4.4 OFFICE/PROFESSIONAL ALTERNATIVE

The Office/Professional Use Alternative assumes the same level of office development on the project site instead residential and retail. The Office/Professional Use Alternative would only marginally reduce impacts as compared to the proposed project for hydrology and water quality, noise, public services and utilities and service systems. The Office/Professional Use Alternative would have no change on impacts as compared to the proposed project on aesthetics, air quality, cultural resources, and hazardous materials, noise, hydrology and water quality. This Alternative would have more impacts to traffic by increasing office commuter volumes, as well as population and housing by eliminating existing dwelling units without replacement.

9.5 ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS

The alternatives analysis in this Section discusses and compares the environmental impacts associated with the No Project Alternative, the Existing General Plan and Zoning Alternative and the Office/Professional Use Alternative of the proposed West Gateway project.

9.5.1 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF THE NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

9.5.1.1 Impacts of the No Project Alternative Related to Aesthetics

The No Project Alternative would not change the existing views of and from the project site because no redevelopment would occur on the project site. This Alternative would not result in construction or operation of land uses on the site and would not result in views of construction activity or suburban/urban land uses on the site from off site locations. The project site currently contains existing residential, retail and civic uses with structures of varying age and condition interspersed with vacant lots. The No Project Alternative would not result in redevelopment of the West Gateway area and the project site would remain in its existing condition consisting of blighting influences such as deteriorated buildings and vacant lots.

9.5.1.2 Impacts of the No Project Alternative Related to Air Quality

The No Project Alternative would not result in any adverse air quality impacts because no redevelopment is proposed. This Alternative would not involve construction or operational air quality impacts because the project site would remain in its current condition.

9.5.1.3 Impacts of the No Project Alternative Related to Cultural Resources

The No Project Alternative would not result in adverse short or long term impacts on cultural resources because no disruption of soils would occur on the project site because no construction or operation of land use would occur on the site. In addition, no historic resources would be disturbed because the project site would remain in its current condition.

9.5.1.4 Impacts of the No Project Alternative Related to Hazardous Materials

The No Project Alternative would not result in adverse short or long term impacts related to hazardous materials because no redevelopment or operations would occur on the project site and, therefore, no hazardous materials would be brought to or from the site or used on the site. Therefore, this Alternative would not result in adverse impacts related to hazardous materials.

9.5.1.5 Impacts of the No Project Alternative Related to Hydrology and Water Quality

The No Project Alternative would result in no adverse short or long term impacts related to hydrology because no disruption of the site would occur and no changes in existing conditions related to water infiltration and runoff would occur. The No Project Alternative will not result in short or long term adverse impacts related to water quality because there would be no change in land uses on the site, no use of hazardous materials and no change in surface hydrology. Therefore, the No Project Alternative would not result in adverse impacts related to hydrology and water quality.

9.5.1.6 Impacts of the No Project Alternative Related to Land Use and Planning

The No Project Alternative would result in no land use impacts because the existing land uses in West Gateway would continue. However, the No Project Alternative would adversely impact planned uses for the Downtown area and the West Gateway redevelopment plans.

9.5.1.7 Impacts of the No Project Alternative Related to Noise

The No Project Alternative would result in no adverse short or long term impacts related to noise because no changes in existing conditions related to the project site or project related traffic would occur. Therefore, the No Project Alternative would not result in adverse impacts related to noise.

9.5.1.8 Impacts of the No Project Alternative Related to Population and Housing

The No Project Alternative would result in no adverse impacts to existing housing. However, it would reduce the overall housing growth supporting the Downtown Core area. With fewer housing units supporting the Downtown Core area, a likely outcome would be higher market value of existing housing, making it less affordable in the area. This is a socio-economic impact of this Alternative, but is not considered an adverse impact.

9.5.1.9 Impacts of the No Project Alternative Related to Recreation

The No Project Alternative would result in adverse impacts to recreation facilities or opportunities in the City of Long Beach because no change in the existing land uses would occur under this Alternative.

9.5.1.10 Impacts of the No Project Alternative Related to Transportation and Circulation

The No Project Alternative would not change existing traffic conditions because no development is proposed on the project site and no construction or operations trips would be generated by the

project site. No impacts related to transportation and circulation would occur under the No Project Alternative.

9.5.1.11 Impacts of the No Project Alternative Related to Utilities and Service Systems

This No Project Alternative would not result in any short or long term adverse impacts on utilities and service systems because no construction or land uses are proposed on the project site and, therefore, no demand for utilities and service systems would be generated on the site.

9.5.2 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF THE GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING ALTERNATIVE

This Alternative is a reduced density alternative which assumes that the approximately 11.66-acre project site would be developed to its maximum residential land use potential consistent with the site's existing General Plan and zoning designation. This alternative would also have the same amount of retail commercial land uses (15,000 square feet) in the same location along Magnolia Avenue as the proposed West Gateway project. This is consistent with the existing commercial character of Magnolia Avenue and the predominately residential character of the remainder of the project site.

This Alternative assumes that future project site development would be in full compliance with all existing General Plan LUD No. 7 and PD-30 zoning district land use and development standards. Based on the gross acreages for Parcels 9-11 (all exceed 15,001 square feet, so 54 units per acre were prescribed). Based on a maximum of 54 units per acre, Parcels 9-11 could accommodate no more than 454 units under current density standards. Therefore, this alternative would provide 245 units less than the maximum density of 699 units under the proposed West Gateway project.

9.5.2.1 Impacts of the Existing General Plan and Zoning Alternative Related to Aesthetics

This Alternative would result in a substantial change in the visual character of the project site. The redevelopment of the West Gateway area will enhance the scenic value of the project area over current conditions and as envisioned in the Downtown Long Beach Strategic Plan. Similar to the proposed project, redevelopment of the project area will not adversely impact the aesthetics of the project area.

9.5.2.2 Impacts of the Existing General Plan and Zoning Alternative Related to Air Quality

This Alternative would be in similar square footage of land uses resulting in construction that would be approximately the same length in time to the construction under the proposed West Gateway project. The construction related emissions would occur for approximately the same period of time under this Alternative compared to the proposed project. Therefore, this Alternative was assumed to result in similar short term construction air quality impacts in ROG and NO_x to the West Gateway Project.

The long term air quality emissions under this Alternative may be significant and adverse and, because of the greater number of vehicle trips than current levels and the impacts related to ROG would most likely still be significant given the amount of development of residential units. Therefore, this Alternative was assumed to result in similar long term operations air quality impacts than the West Gateway project.

9.5.2.3 Impacts of the Existing General Plan and Zoning Alternative Related to Cultural Resources

The project site is currently developed and there are no known archeological resources on this site. However, the City Long Beach has many historic structures. Therefore, grading and development of the project site under this Alternative, similar to the proposed West Gateway project, would most likely have an impact on historic resources. Similar to the proposed project, significant adverse impacts on cultural resources may occur as a result of this Alternative. However, similar to the proposed West Gateway project, this Alternative is anticipated to result in a less than significant impact after mitigation, but would have the same cumulative impact on historic resources regarding three potential historic properties. Because this Alternative and the proposed West Gateway project will result in disruption of the entire project site during construction, the potential impacts of these Alternatives related to cultural resources would be similar.

9.5.2.4 Impacts of the Existing General Plan and Zoning Alternative Related to Hazardous Materials

It is expected that the construction of this Alternative would result in the use, handling, storage, transport and disposal of hazardous materials similar to the proposed West Gateway project, including materials such as fuels, oils, degreasers, solvents, paints and other architectural coverings. Similarly, the operation of commercial and residential uses on the project site under both this Alternative and the proposed West Gateway project will result in the use, handling, storage, transport and disposal of hazardous materials typically used for these types of land uses, including oils, degreasers, paints, architectural coverings, pesticides, herbicides, office supplies and other typical materials. The use, handling, storage, transport and disposal of hazardous materials are strictly controlled by existing federal, state and local regulations. In addition, the same mitigation would still apply to this Alternative as the proposed development. Therefore, the construction and operation of this Alternative, like the proposed West Gateway project, would not be expected to result in significant adverse impacts related to hazardous materials after mitigation.

9.5.2.5 Impacts of the Existing General Plan and Zoning Alternative Related to Hydrology and Water Quality

Grading volumes for this Alternative would be comparable or slightly less than under the proposed West Gateway project. Therefore, the potential for short term, construction related water quality impacts associated with erosion would be anticipated to be similar under this Alternative than for the proposed West Gateway project. The duration of construction under this Alternative would not any be longer than the proposed West Gateway project. While the total number of dwelling units would reduced, the amount of impervious surfaces would be similar to

the proposed project. The potential for erosion related water quality impacts during construction would be about the same as the proposed project this Alternative. Therefore, this Alternative would result in comparable construction-related water quality impacts to the proposed West Gateway project. As with the proposed West Gateway project, this Alternative would be required to comply with National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) and other water quality requirements to identify and control potential storm water pollutants during construction and operations. Compliance with these regulations would be anticipated to would minimize water quality impacts of this Alternative to a less than significant level. Overall, the potential short and long term water quality impacts of this Alternative would be expected to be about the same as the proposed West Gateway project or slightly less because of the smaller amount of development on the project site.

9.5.2.6 Impacts of the Existing General Plan and Zoning Alternative Related to Land Use and Planning

Since this Alternative would be consistent with the Land Use Element, zoning and other elements of the General Plan, it would not require amendment to those City of Long Beach planning documents. In addition, this Alternative would not have the indirect impacts associated with the higher density residential uses on the site. This Alternative would not meet the redevelopment planning goals as well as the proposed West Gateway project, but would still provide housing and retail opportunities needed for the West Gateway neighborhood.

9.5.2.7 Impacts of the Existing General Plan and Zoning Alternative Related to Noise

Construction of this Alternative would about the same as the proposed West Gateway project. Short term noise impacts would occur for approximately the same period of time under this Alternative. Like the proposed project, this Alternative would result in short term adverse noise impacts that could be mitigated to below a level of significance.

The operation of the retail and residential land uses under this Alternative, including traffic and mechanical equipment is not anticipated to result in significant adverse long term noise impacts after mitigation. Therefore, in the long term, noise levels of this Alternative are expected to be similar to the proposed West Gateway project.

9.5.2.8 Impacts of the Existing General Plan and Zoning Alternative Related to Population and Housing

This Alternative would have a beneficial effect on population and housing in the West Gateway area. This alternative, like the proposed project, helps to meet the housing goals for the Downtown Area. The number of displaced dwelling units would be exactly the same as the proposed West Gateway project.

9.5.2.9 Impacts of the Existing General Plan and Zoning Alternative Related to Recreation

This Alternative would not have adverse impacts to recreation because like the proposed project it would be required to mitigate any impacts based on the additional demand for recreation

facilities as prescribed by the City's code, through the provision of park land or the payment of fees. This alternative would have similar but less impact to cumulatively significant recreation impacts because the additional residential uses would still impact an area that has a relatively low per capita acreage to population ratio. No additional recreational opportunities would be afforded either by the proposed West Gateway project or this Alternative.

9.5.2.10 Impacts of the Existing General Plan and Zoning Alternative Related to Transportation and Circulation

Under this Alternative, similar to the project, continued implementation of the General Plan would result in up to 454 residential units for Parcels 9, 10 and 11 and the same amount of total retail as the proposed West Gateway project. Therefore, it is anticipated that this Alternative would not result in greater traffic impacts than the proposed West Gateway project.

9.5.2.11 Impacts of the Existing General Plan and Zoning Alternative Related to Utilities and Service Systems

This Alternative is not expected to result in adverse impacts on electricity, natural gas, communication services (telephone), water and wastewater services. Because this Alternative would result in a new development on the project site, it is expected that the demand for utilities and service systems would be proportionally greater for this Alternative than for the No Project, but less than the proposed West Gateway project.

9.5.3 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF THE OFFICE/PROFESSIONAL USE ALTERNATIVE

9.5.3.1 Impacts of the Office/Professional Use Alternative Related to Aesthetics

The Office/Professional Use Alternative would have similar impacts on aesthetics as the proposed project. The overall design and layout of the proposed project would change by eliminating the residential units as proposed in the West Gateway project. The development of the project site, whether it is with the proposed project or the Office/Professional Alternative, would not adversely impact the project area aesthetics.

9.5.3.2 Impacts of the Office/Professional Use Alternative Related to Air Quality

While there would be a slight reduction in the amount of construction equipment and the long term operational air quality impacts due to the elimination of the residential dwelling units, the Office/Professional Use Alternative would have a similar level of air quality impacts during construction. This Alternative is expected to increase operational air quality impacts due to an increase in traffic during peak hours and higher intensity uses on the site. As a result, the short and long term air quality impacts of the Office/Professional Use Alternative would be similar to or greater than the impacts which would occur under the other alternatives or the proposed project.

9.5.3.3 Impacts of the Office/Professional Use Alternative Related to Cultural Resources

The Office/Professional Use Alternative is assumed to result in approximately the same level of surface disruption and demolition as the proposed West Gateway project. As a result, the potential for adverse impacts related to cultural resources under the Office/Professional Use Alternative would be similar to the impacts which would occur under the West Gateway project.

9.5.3.4 Impacts of the Office/Professional Use Alternative Related to Hazardous Materials

Impacts associated with the Office/Professional Use Alternative would be similar to the impacts which would occur under the West Gateway project because this Alternative and the West Gateway project would not result in potential impacts related to the use, handling, storage, transport and disposal of hazardous materials.

9.5.3.5 Impacts of the Office/Professional Use Alternative Related to Hydrology and Water Quality

Potential impacts related to the hydrology and water quality under the Office/Professional Use Alternative would be similar to the impacts which would occur under the West Gateway project. Development of the site whether it is with the proposed project or the Office/Professional Use Alternative would be required to comply with applicable City, State, and federal regulations and standards.

9.5.3.6 Impacts of the Office/Professional Use Alternative Related to Land Use and Planning

This Alternative is not in keeping with the residential uses planned for West Gateway. However, it is not explicitly inconsistent with any policy or regulation in either the Land Use Element or the PD-30 regulations. This alternative does not support the residential layout of the Strategic Plan for Downtown Long Beach, but as discussed earlier, the Strategic Plan is not a regulatory plan. Therefore, this alternative does not implement the residential goals of the area, but is allowable under all applicable regulatory documents and is considered to have less than significant impacts related to land use and planning.

9.5.3.7 Impacts of the Office/Professional Use Alternative Related to Noise

Under the Office/Professional Use Alternative the West Gateway area would be developed entirely as office/professional square footage, rather than as a mix of housing and commercial development. This use would result in only a slight reduction in trip generation as the proposed West Gateway project. As a result, potential short and long term noise impacts under the Office/Professional Use Alternative would be similar to the impacts which would occur under the West Gateway project.

9.5.3.8 Impacts of the Office/Professional Use Alternative Related to Population and Housing

Like the No Project Alternative, this Alternative does not meet the housing goals planned for the West Gateway area. This Alternative results in the net reduction of housing and affordable

housing opportunities in the area by removing existing dwelling units without replacement units, and would therefore be considered a significant impact.

9.5.3.9 Impacts of the Office/Professional Use Alternative Related to Recreation

The Office/Professional Use Alternative would result in reduced population growth within the City relative to the project. The ratio of park land per 1,000 residents would increase with a lower citywide population and would thereby marginally improve the City's per capita park provision goals and would not have the cumulative impact to those goals that the proposed West Gateway project and the Existing General Plan and Zoning Alternatives would. This Alternative would have no impacts on recreation or park provision.

9.5.3.10 Impacts of the Office/Professional Use Alternative Related to Transportation and Circulation

Under the Office/Professional Use Alternative the project site would be developed with only office/professional uses. Without mixed uses, this Alternative might not encourage non-auto travel as people could not easily walk or take a local bus to and from work. Therefore, the number of vehicle trips would increase as a result of an emphasis on office/professional land uses. Additional trips inbound and outbound to and from the project area would travel in the predominant direction of travel (inbound in the morning and outbound in the afternoon), as office development would attract people to the project area. Most notably this Alternative would have more contribute higher volumes of traffic during both the AM and PM peak hours than either the proposed West Gateway project or the Existing General Plan and Zoning Alternatives would. Therefore, this alternative could increase the total number of trips generated over time and also increase congestion by adding trips to the peak direction of flow.

9.5.3.11 Impacts of the Office/Professional Use Alternative Related to Utilities and Service Systems

The Office/Professional Use Alternative would only include office uses; however, the proposed project and this Alternative would both be required to comply with existing federal, State, and local regulations regarding solid waste diversion and the use of low-flow toilets and other water conservation measures mandated by State law. As a result, potential impacts on utilities and service systems under the Office/Professional Use Alternative would be similar to the impacts which would occur under the West Gateway project.

9.6 ABILITY OF THE ALTERNATIVES TO MEET THE DEFINED PROJECT OBJECTIVES

9.6.1 DEFINED PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The West Gateway project objectives implement the Redevelopment Plan's objectives and are as follows:

- Provide additional housing opportunities by replacing deteriorated existing housing unit with new housing units.
- Provide new opportunities for neighborhood serving retail.
- Promote appropriate urban densities in the project area as provided in the Downtown Strategy for Development.
- Enhance opportunities and incentives for private financial investment in the project area.
- Improve the quality of affordable housing in the project area.
- Expand and integrate quality residential uses into the Greater Downtown area (Goal No. 9 from the Strategy for Development).
- Enhance job/housing balance in Downtown Long Beach.
- Concentrate a mix of uses near the light rail station to improve air quality, reduce vehicular congestion and enhance the quality of life in the community.

9.6.2 ASSESSMENT OF ALTERNATIVES' ABILITY TO MEET THE DEFINED PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The ability of each project alternative and the West Gateway project to meet the defined City objectives for the propose project is summarized in Table 9-2 and is discussed in the following Sections.

9.6.2.1 Ability of the No Project Alternative to Meet the Project Objectives

As shown in Table 9-2, the No Project Alternative would not provide for a mix of land uses that promotes efficient use of land, would not facilitate convenient mobility options and would not meet the City's or objectives for the proposed project of providing additional housing opportunities by replacing deteriorated existing housing units with new housing units or provide new opportunities for neighborhood serving retail. This Alternative would not promote appropriate urban densities in the project area as provided in the Downtown Strategy for Development, expand and integrate quality residential uses into the Greater Downtown area, enhance job/housing balance in Downtown Long Beach or concentrate a mix of uses near the light rail station to improve air quality, reduce vehicular congestion and enhance the quality of life in the community. Overall, this alternative would not achieve major project objectives.

9.6.2.2 Ability of the Existing General Plan and Zoning Alternative to Meet the Project Objectives

As shown in Table 9-2, this Alternative would to a lesser extent meet the City's project objectives by promoting mixed-use development that provides shopping and living opportunities for residents of the City of Long Beach and surrounding areas. As with the proposed project,

this Alternative could concentrate a mix of uses near the light rail station to improve air quality, reduce vehicular congestion and enhance the quality of life in the community.

This Alternative would not fully meet the City's objective to develop the site as a commercial and residential center that provides residential and commercial uses for the residents of Long Beach and surrounding areas, and that maximizes the advantages of the site's location proximate to Downtown Long Beach due to the reduced density in comparison to the proposed project. Also this Alternative has much more limited marketability given the current lack of development interest and development inactivity characteristic of the project site properties.

9.6.2.3 Ability of the Office/Professional Use Alternative to Meet the Project Objectives

As shown in Table 9-2, this Alternative would not meet the City's project objectives of providing additional housing opportunities by replacing deteriorated existing housing units with new housing units or providing new opportunities for neighborhood serving retail. In addition, this Alternative would not effectively improve the quality of affordable housing in the project area, expand and integrate quality residential uses into the Greater Downtown area, concentrate a mix of uses near the light rail station to improve air quality, reduce vehicular congestion or enhance the quality of life in the community. This Alternative would not provide any affordable living opportunities as the proposed West Gateway project. Considering that Downtown Long Beach is housing-rich in the jobs/housing balance, this Alternative would provide more employment opportunities for residents of Long Beach and surrounding areas improving the jobs/housing balance in Downtown Long Beach better than the proposed West Gateway project or the Existing General Plan and Zoning Alternative.

TABLE 9-2
ABILITY OF THE ALTERNATIVES AND THE WEST GATEWAY PROJECT TO
MEET THE DEFINED PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Objective	Does Alternative Meet Objective?			
	Proposed Project	No Project Existing Conditions	Existing GP and Zoning	Office - Professional
1. Provide additional housing opportunities by replacing deteriorated existing housing unit with new housing units.	+	0	+/-	0
2. Provide new opportunities for neighborhood serving retail.	+	0	+/-	0
3. Promote appropriate urban densities in the project area as provided in the Downtown Strategy for Development.	+	0	+/-	0
4. Enhance opportunities and incentives for private financial investment in the project area.	+	0	+/-	+/-
5. Improve the quality of affordable housing in the project area.	+	0	+/-	0
6. Expand and integrate quality residential uses into the Greater Downtown area (Goal No. 9 from the Strategy for Development).	+	0	+/-	0
7. Enhance job/housing balance in Downtown Long Beach.	0	0	0	+
8. Concentrate a mix of uses near the light rail station to improve air quality, reduce vehicular congestion and enhance the quality of life in the community.	+	0	+/-	+/-
+ Meets objective.	+/-	Meet objective, but not as well.		
0 Fails to meet objective.	NA	Not applicable.		

9.7 ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

Section 15126.6(e)(2) of the CEQA Guidelines requires that an EIR identify the environmentally superior alternative. If the No Project Alternative is the environmentally superior alternative, the EIR must also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the remaining alternatives. Table 9-3 compares the significant unavoidable adverse impacts of the proposed West Gateway project to the impacts under the alternatives.

As shown in Table 9-3, the proposed West Gateway project is anticipated to result in significant unavoidable adverse impacts related to:

- Air Quality (construction, project and cumulative)
- Cultural Resources (cumulative)
- Recreation (cumulative)
- Public Services – Schools (project and cumulative)

The No Project Alternative is not anticipated to result in any significant unavoidable adverse impacts, since it does not propose any development on the project site. The Existing General Plan and Zoning Alternative is anticipated to result in the same significant unavoidable adverse impacts as the West Gateway project, however, many of these impacts will likely be lesser than under the proposed project because of the decreased amount of development on the project site under this Alternative.

The Office/Professional Use Alternative is anticipated to result in different significant unavoidable adverse impacts from the West Gateway project. This Alternative does not contribute to cumulative impacts to recreation and schools. However, this Alternative will have more traffic impacts because of the concentration of vehicle trips during the AM and PM peak hours.

As shown in Table 9-3, the Existing General Plan and Zoning Alternative results in similar unavoidable adverse impacts as the proposed project. Many of the environmental impacts of the proposed project and the project Alternatives are directly related to the type of land use and the intensity of development and in general, projects of higher intensity will generally result in more adverse impacts compared to the proposed project. However, the Office/Professional Use Alternative will result in greater traffic volume and greater displacement of current project site residents without replacement housing. As shown in Table 9-3, the proposed West Gateway project and the Existing General Plan and Zoning Alternative will result in different significant unavoidable adverse impacts than the Office/Professional Use Alternative.

**TABLE 9-3
COMPARISON OF THE IMPACTS OF THE WEST GATEWAY PROJECT
AND THE PROJECT ALTERNATIVES**

Impact Category	Proposed West Gateway Project	No Project / Existing Conditions	Existing General Plan and Zoning	Office/Professional Use Alternative
Aesthetics	Less than significant impacts to Aesthetics.	No impact.	Similar to the West Gateway project.	Similar to the West Gateway project.
Air Quality	Unavoidable adverse impacts and cumulative impacts: short term NOx and long term ROG.	No impact.	Similar to the West Gateway project.	Similar to the West Gateway project.
Cultural Resources	Cumulative impacts on historical resources.	No impact.	Same as under the West Gateway project.	Same as under the West Gateway project.
Hazardous Materials	All impacts can be mitigated to below a level of significance.	No impact.	Same as under the West Gateway project.	Same as under the West Gateway project.
Hydrology and Water Quality	All impacts can be mitigated to below a level of significance.	No impact.	Similar to the West Gateway project.	Similar to the West Gateway project.
Land Use and Planning	Secondary indirect impacts on support services due to higher residential density than planned.	No impact. Not consistent with plans for West Gateway area.	Less than significant secondary impact on planned residential support services.	No impact on planned residential support services. Not consistent with plans for West Gateway area.
Noise	All impacts mitigated by application of codes and mitigation measures.	No impact.	Same as under the West Gateway project.	Similar to the West Gateway project.
Population and Housing	All impacts mitigated by application of codes and mitigation measures.	No impact.	Same as under the West Gateway project.	Unavoidable impact on affordable housing and planned housing.
Transportation and Traffic	All impacts are less than significant.	No impact.	Similar to the West Gateway project.	Impacts during peak traffic hours.
Recreation	Cumulative impact to recreation.	No impact.	Same as under the West Gateway project.	No impact.
Utilities and Service Systems	All impacts mitigated by application of codes and mitigation measures except project and cumulative impact to schools.	No impact.	Similar to the West Gateway project.	Similar to the West Gateway project and no impact to schools

Table 9-4 shows the environmentally superior alternative by environmental parameter. Where, the impacts were similar, no environmentally superior alternative is identified. Where there is a clear cut environmentally superior alternative it is identified as such. Where there is clearly an alternative which will have the most impact it is identified as most. In parameters where impacts will be significant after mitigation they are deemed as such.

In summary, the three alternatives, including the proposed project, all have significant adverse impacts. Common to all three alternatives are significant adverse impacts to air quality on both a project and cumulative level and cultural resources on a cumulative level. The proposed project and the Existing General Plan and Zoning Alternative have similar impacts to schools and recreation (although the Existing General Plan Alternative impacts these resources to a lesser degree), while the Office/Professional Use Alternative does not impact schools and recreation, but has adverse impacts to housing and peak hour traffic. Therefore, no alternative would eliminate all environmental impacts, there is simply a trade-off between impacts making no alternative environmentally superior over all when compared to the other alternatives.

**TABLE 9-4
ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR PROJECT ALTERNATIVES
BY ENVIRONMENTAL PARAMETER**

Environmental Parameter	Proposed West Gateway Project	Existing General Plan and Zoning	Office/Professional Use Alternative
Aesthetics	Similar	Similar	Similar
Air Quality	Similar (Sig)	Similar (Sig)	Similar (Sig)
Air Quality - Cumulative	Similar (Sig)	Similar (Sig)	Similar (Sig)
Cultural Resources	Similar	Similar	Similar
Cultural Resources - Cumulative	Similar (Sig)	Similar (Sig)	Similar (Sig)
Hazardous Materials	Similar	Similar	Similar
Hydrology and Water Quality	Similar	Similar	Similar
Land Use and Planning	Superior	Superior	Most (Sig)
Noise	Similar	Similar	Similar
Population and Housing	Superior	Superior	Most (Sig)
Transportation and Traffic	Similar	Similar	Most
Recreation -Cumulative	Similar (Sig)	Similar (Sig)	Superior
Utilities & Service Systems - Schools	Similar (Sig)	Similar (Sig)	Superior
Utilities & Service Systems – Schools - Cumulative	Similar (Sig)	Similar (Sig)	Superior
Superior = Least or no impacts to environmental parameter. Similar = Comparable level of impact to another or all alternatives. Most Impact = Most significant impact to environmental parameter. (Sig) = Significant Adverse Impacts after mitigation.			

9.8 ALTERNATIVES COMPARISON

9.8.1 ABILITY TO MEET THE PROJECT OBJECTIVES

As shown in Table 9-2, the Existing General Plan and Zoning Alternative meets the project objectives, but to a lesser extent than the proposed West Gateway project. The Office/Professional Use Alternative meets only a few of the project objectives. The No Project/General Plan Alternative does not meet any of the defined project objectives.

9.8.2 ELIMINATION AND/OR REDUCTION OF SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE IMPACTS

The No Project Alternative does not meet any of the defined project objectives. However, this Alternative does avoid all the significant unavoidable adverse impacts of the proposed West Gateway project and the other project alternatives.

The Existing General Plan and Zoning Alternative meets the defined project objectives, but to a lesser extent than the Proposed West Gateway project. The impacts of this Alternative would be similar to the impacts under the proposed project but would not require any amendment to the General Plan or PD-30 and compared to the West Gateway Project, has reduced impacts to schools and reduced cumulative impacts to schools and recreation, but not to a less than significant level.

The Office/Professional Use Alternative has similar impact to the proposed project in most impact categories, but would have greater peak hour traffic impacts and would have unavoidable adverse impacts on housing by eliminating existing dwelling units without replacement. This Alternative would have less than significant impacts to schools and recreation.

In summary, the Existing General Plan and Zoning Alternative meets the project objectives to a lesser extent than the proposed West Gateway project, but does not reduce environmental impacts enough to be environmentally superior to the proposed project.